

## Nevada Early Intervention *Winter–Spring* Family Newsletter

May-June 2016 Volume 6 No 3

### Message from Part C's State Family Resource Coordinator, Information & Referral...

Dear Parents/Families,

A child's parents are the ones who care the most about their child and know the most about him or her. Parents are better situated than most to understand the unique needs of their child and to make decisions that are in their child's best interests. As a result, better informed parents are more likely to make better decisions for their children with special needs.

Through participation and involvement, you can become a better advocate for your child's needs as they grow up and become a part of the community. Years ago I was taught that there was a "bigger picture" out there and that as a parent of a child who received early intervention services I had real power in my voice and actions.

There are many ways that you and your family can get involved with Early Intervention Services beyond the services and support activities specifically designed for you.

There are councils, workgroups, and subcommittees where you can: 1) Provide valuable input from a parent's perspective, 2) Assist in the development of program policies, and 3) Help shape and create a better system for children receiving Early Intervention Services!

When you are involved, you gain experience in communication as well as leadership and it helps you to get useful information and answers to questions you may have.

Actively participating and interacting with others, you can choose to make a difference in the lives of many young children with special needs and their families. One voice can make a dramatic difference!

If you would like more information, please feel free to contact me at: [ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov)

Sincerely,  
Dan Dinnell



Cheryl, Eric, and Dan

#### NEVADA'S EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

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**Project ASSIST**  
**1-800-522-0066**

[ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov)

Please enjoy the stories shared of families who have "been there and done that!" — See pages 2 & 3.

\*Central Directory of Resources: <http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ProjectASSIST>

### MEETING NOTICE NEVADA EARLY INTERVENTION INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL (ICC)

Date and Time of Meeting: **Thursday, April 21, at 9:00 a.m.**

This meeting will be in **Las Vegas only**. No Videoconferencing will be offered!

Please check for meeting agendas posted at:

<http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ICC/Meetings/>

It is especially important to hear from families and I encourage you to participate. If you would like more information about attending meetings or how to submit public comments to the Council, please contact me at [ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov) or call Project ASSIST at 1-800-522-0066

The ICC membership roster is now on line at <http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ICC/Home/>, under **"Who is on the ICC?"** and then click on **Current Membership**.

# Been there, done that!

**PARTNERS IN POLICYMAKING** is a very intensive and innovative national model of leadership training, designed to teach parents and self-advocates the power of advocacy and to change the way people with disabilities are supported, viewed, taught, live and work. For information visit [http://www.unr.edu/nced/projects/nced\\_pip](http://www.unr.edu/nced/projects/nced_pip)



"I was fortunate enough to be selected to be a part of this first ever Partners in Policy Making class for Elko, and my first thought was how am I going to describe that first weekend [there are 4 weekends over 4 months] and how I felt and what I learned in just a few paragraphs. So here it goes and I hope I do myself and this class justice... Wow, this has been the most depressing, frustrating, educational, motivational, and inspiring class I have ever been to. Two full days of information that has challenged or put a spin on everything I thought I knew about being a parent of a child with a disability. Right down to the very words I use to describe my child who has a disability.

Also who better to set an example and lead by experience than the seven self-advocates who were there to learn right beside the fifteen parents of children with disabilities. Everyone learning from everyone else! Truly twenty-two amazing, brave, confident, caring individuals coming together to make a difference in both their own and someone else's life.

The presenters themselves were so very amazing. The topics for this first weekend session were *History of Developmental Disabilities, People First Language, Inclusive Education, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, and the *Individualized Education Program (IEP)*. All of the presenters were well spoken, knowledgeable, helpful, passionate, and most of all caring. The information they brought was all well presented and helpful. I know I will be referring back to much of the information given as I have more time to process what was presented.

I would like to encourage, even challenge every parent, but especially those with young children to reach out. Take the opportunity to attend Partners in Policy Making or any similar class offered. Knowledge is power and the more you know the better you can advocate for your child and teach them to become advocates for themselves." ~ Janina Easley, ICC Parent Representative

Nevada's **Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN)** serves "...children who have or are at risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally", by working with families and across systems to develop strategies that promote quality well-being and support for those children and their families.

<http://dphh.nv.gov/Programs/CYSHCN/CYSHCN-Home/>

**Nevada PEP**, as the statewide Parent Training and Information Center, offers classes such as **"FAMILIES ARE IMPORTANT"** for families to better understand Early Intervention, their Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and the Transition process from Early Intervention into the community or school districts. In **"SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENT ADVOCACY"** participants will learn the importance of advocacy and effective strategies to help children with disabilities. Communication techniques will help you feel confident advocating for children. For more information visit their website at [www.nvpep.org/](http://www.nvpep.org/)

**Family TIES is Nevada's Family-to-Family Healthcare Information & Education Center**, providing statewide support to families of children and youth with special health care needs by:

- Assisting families as they navigate public and private systems, including health systems and insurance plans,
- Assisting families in accessing services and resources for their children and in partnering with providers and caregivers,
- Working with families, health care providers, public and private agencies, and advocacy or support groups to promote family-centered care and medical homes for children with special health care needs,
- Promoting discussion and linkages among families, providers, managed care programs, and government to better serve the health care and related needs of children and families in Nevada.

For more information visit their web site at: <http://www.familytiesnv.org/>

The ICC provides support to the State in the ongoing development and implementation of the **State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)**. Nevada's SSIP is a five (5) year plan designed to ensure the system of early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA results in improved outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The primary target of the SSIP plan should be improved social and emotional outcomes.



"On February 18, this year, I had the opportunity to serve as a parent representative at the second SSIP Phase II Stakeholder Workgroup meeting. Unbeknownst to me, I was the only parent representative in attendance. At first, I felt completely out of place as a parent with a room full of Early Childhood professionals and charts filled with acronyms and logic models, but as the meeting proceeded I found my place.

The reason this workgroup was convened was to review and discuss the logic models and improvement plans for the evaluation/assessment and practitioner knowledge in identifying, measuring outcomes, etc. regarding the area of social/emotional behavior. Although the focus of early intervention is supposed to be the "family," it was apparent that the practitioners were only considering the social/emotional of the child. With input from others, I was able to emphasize how the social/emotional focus of the SSIP should not only apply to the child but the entire family.

When my child was in early intervention, he did not require social/emotional intervention, but I did. I told my services coordinator on more than one occasion that I was not coping with the "new" life with a child with special needs. I mentioned to the workgroup that it would have been wonderful if a recommendation for counseling, support group, etc. had been suggested, something more than a referral to another agency.

This is just another instance, where parent involvement in these discussions is crucial. The workgroup agreed that the social/emotional behavior of the family unit, i.e. parents, caretakers, siblings is an area that is often overlooked and made a commitment to bring the focus back to families." ~ Alisa Koot, ICC Parent Representative

If you are interested in volunteer activities, where you can receive knowledge, share information, gain skills and experience in advocating for others and your family, the NEVADA EARLY INTERVENTION INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL (ICC) has a permanent **FAMILY SUPPORT RESOURCE SUBCOMMITTEE (FSRS)** that can always use parents and others who have a passion for supporting early intervention.

For more information email [ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov) or call 1-800-522-0066

**"You are Your Child's First-Lifelong Advocate!"** — Highly involved parents and other family members are fundamental to a child's successful journey. This 2-page fact sheet speaks directly to parents about what it means to advocate for their child, describes the "successful lifelong advocate," and suggests strategies that parents can use and considerations to keep in mind. From New Mexico's PTI, *Parents Reaching Out*: [http://parentsreachingout.org/cd/pdfs\\_en/fs001.pdf](http://parentsreachingout.org/cd/pdfs_en/fs001.pdf)



**Nevada Hands & Voices** is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families and their children who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as the professionals who serve them.

We are a parent-driven, parent/professional collaborative group that is unbiased towards communication modes and methods. Our diverse membership includes those who are deaf, hard of hearing and their families who communicate orally, with sign, cue, and/or combined methods. We exist to help our children reach their highest potential.

We offer bi-monthly parent connections meetings (Las Vegas & Reno) that are topic based around issues surrounding deaf and hard of hearing children. We also provide Guide By Your Side to families with children (birth to 3) who have been recently diagnosed with hearing loss. *Guide By Your Side (GBYS)*™ is a program from Hands & Voices that provides emotional support and unbiased information from trained Parent Guides to other families and to the systems that serve them.

For more information about Nevada Hands & Voices:  
775-351-1959 (Reno) and 702-970-7256 (Las Vegas)  
[www.nvhandsandvoices.org](http://www.nvhandsandvoices.org)





For Families & Professionals  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION LIBRARY—**

*There are a great many things to learn... check them out!!!*

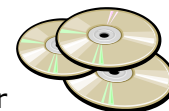
*Don't forget! Mother's Day is May 8<sup>th</sup>*  
**Videos & Books for Mothers**

**A Child with Special Needs** — This DVD features families who share their personal stories in order to help other families understand the experiences, emotions and challenges they will encounter. It provides information on: What to do when you find out that your child has a special need; Moving from confusion and grief to acceptance and empowerment; Finding answers and getting help; Speaking up as your child's best advocate; The importance of looking beyond the diagnosis; and, Focusing on your child's unique strengths.

**Unexpected Journey: When Special Needs Change Our Course** — by Joe & Cindi Ferrini. A comprehensive resource for families confronted with the challenge of special needs. This is a book by a husband and wife whose course in life changed with the birth of their first child. With honesty and sensitivity it offers practical encouragement from parents who have been there.

**More Than A Mom: Living A Full And Balanced Life When Your Child Has Special Needs** — by Amy Baskin & Heather Fawcett. Research, personal experiences, and feedback from over 500 mothers across North America results in a book that is jam-packed with practical strategies, advice, and reassurance for mothers trying to create more manageable and fulfilling lives.

*Don't forget! Father's Day is June 19<sup>th</sup>*  
**Videos & Books for Fathers**



**Father's Voices: A Journey of the Heart** — This DVD focuses on four dads and how their lives have been dramatically changed because of their children.

**Dads of Disability: Stories for, by, and about fathers of children who experience disability** — by Gary M Dietz. This book helps to show that Dads can be, and are a part of raising a child with a disability. The essays within provide insight into a father's reaction to learning his child has a disability, how he adapts and copes, the learning curve involved, the bond and love that forms along with further describing in some cases the death of a child and how one grieves. There are 41 essays in this book.

With hundreds of books and DVDs available for use statewide, contact your service provider or coordinator. If you have questions or recommendations for the Library, contact **Project ASSIST** toll free at **1-800-522-0066** or send an email to [ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov).

Catalog at: <http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ProjectASSIST/Special-Ed-Library/>

Our "**Resources for Fathers**" page, is a compilation of articles, videos and lists of support groups for dads of children with disabilities: <http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ProjectASSIST/Fathers/>

**Disability.gov** is the federal government website for comprehensive information about disability-related programs, services, policies, laws and regulations. The site links to thousands of resources from many different federal government agencies, as well as state and local governments and nonprofit organizations across the country. Visit at <https://www.disability.gov/>

**ZERO TO THREE's** approach to parent education is based on the belief that parents are the true experts on their children, and that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to raising children. Here at **Parenting Resources** you'll find science-based information and tools designed to help parents and caregivers nurture their young children's development. The information and tools we offer are designed to support parents in developing their own ways to promote their children's growth and development.  
<http://www.zerotothree.org/about-us/funded-projects/parenting-resources/>

**FREE....** Participation in the national **EARLY INTERVENTION FAMILY ALLIANCE (EIFA)** is open to *all* interested in supporting early intervention. . . **Keep informed! Obtain Answers! Impact Policies!**

The EARLY INTERVENTION FAMILY ALLIANCE is a national leadership organization dedicated to improving outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

Members receive email alerts and updates on key early intervention topics and can join the **EIFA list** serve to participate in active discussions and share experiences. Web: [www.eifamilyalliance.org](http://www.eifamilyalliance.org)

**NORTHEASTERN NEVADA EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES**

\* contact your Developmental Specialist/Service Coordinator for more information

⇒ **Nevada Early Intervention Services—Elko:**

**NORTHWESTERN NEVADA EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES**

\* contact your Developmental Specialist/Service Coordinator for more information

⇒ **Advanced Pediatric Therapies—Reno:**

- **Community Play groups** every 2nd & 4th Friday, of each month. Lots of fun games and activities for the kids. Families should call for more information: 775-825-4744.

⇒ **Easter Seals Nevada—Reno:**

⇒ **Nevada Early Intervention Services—Carson City:**

⇒ **Nevada Early Intervention Services—Reno:**

- **Family TIES** provides family support in filling out **Medicaid/SSI and other Social Services applications** every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday from 10am-12noon at NEIS, by RSVP only! Please call: 775-823-9500 to RSVP.
- **Friends of Special Children** - This non-profit has supported families at NEIS in so many ways both financially and physically. If you are interested, contact Gretchen Canepa at 688-0303 or [GCanepa@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:GCanepa@adsd.nv.gov).
- **NEVADA Hands and Voices** meets at NEIS, usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every other month on the "odd" months, at 6:00 pm. Contact: 775-351-1959, or email: [info@nvhandsandvoices.org](mailto:info@nvhandsandvoices.org)

⇒ **Therapy Management Group (TMG)—Reno:**

- **Inclusive Developmental Play Group** at Early Head Start. Call Melissa McGovern at: 775-525-4072.

⇒ **The Continuum—Reno:**

- **Carousel Kids** is an inclusive childcare program. We also offer an intergenerational experience with elders from our onsite adult day program. For more information or to schedule a tour, phone: 775-829-4700.

**SOUTHERN NEVADA EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES**

\* contact your Developmental Specialist/Service Coordinator for more information

⇒ **Easter Seals Nevada—Las Vegas:**

- **Playgroups** on Fridays. Come Join the Fun! Call Jessica Hartley at: 702-329-0345

⇒ **ISS Baby Steps—Las Vegas:**

- **Inspired Discoveries Playgroup** welcomes children 0-3 years old in an inclusive setting. Please join in our fun adventure! Call: 702-586-3100

⇒ **Kideology—Las Vegas:**

⇒ **Nevada Early Intervention Services—Las Vegas:**

- **Parent meeting** for families of children (any age) with Prader Willi Syndrome, at NEIS. Contact Erica Magana (Bilingual) at 702-486-9265 or [emagana@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:emagana@adsd.nv.gov), or Shirley Farkas at: 702-486-9263 or [sfarkas@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:sfarkas@adsd.nv.gov)

⇒ **Positively Kids—Las Vegas:**

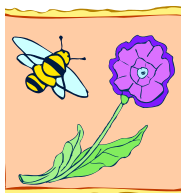
⇒ **Therapy Management Group (TMG)—Las Vegas:**

- **Milagros Escondidos** family support group, last Thursday of the month, 6-8pm, at 6600 W. Charleston Blvd., Ste. 111
- **Inclusive Developmental Playgroups.** Thursdays at Family to Family & UNLV Preschool. Contact Robbi Lucero at: 702-335-1666 or [rlucero@tmgnv.com](mailto:rlucero@tmgnv.com)

**EI program information — [http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/Early\\_Intervention\\_Programs/](http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/Early_Intervention_Programs/)**

**Nevada Parent Advocacy Initiative:** By Parents, for Parents—It's all the insider information about Nevada's Early Intervention Services System in one common place. This project consists of a parent Facebook ([www.nvparents.com/fb](http://www.nvparents.com/fb)) support page for families with children in Early Intervention Services, information to give parents the basic knowledge they need to access and utilize services effectively, and a website that shares with everyone. **Early Intervention Parents Nevada** is a place for all parents of children with disabilities to connect. Please post your personal stories, questions about your child's development and/or disability, questions about Early Intervention programs, great parenting articles you've come across, parenting questions, community resources and events, etc. at [www.nvparents.com](http://www.nvparents.com).

The Part C Family Newsletter has opportunities to suggest and share... You are invited to submit articles, share your story, or include your child in a Family Spotlight, with a photo. (All items are subject to editing and review.)



**Nevada's Central Directory** website, filled with information and resources, includes a "Links" page with all kinds of useful websites and a Frequently Asked Questions page.  
**<http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ProjectASSIST>**

To receive the newsletter electronically and to make sure you don't miss out on useful information, please send your e-mail address to Dan Dinnell at [ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov)

